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ABSTRACT

This practicum report describes a gifted education program, for students in grades 1 and 2, which developed a newsletter to broaden the parents' knowledge of giftedness. The weekly newsletter, sent to parents of 43 children, addressed such topics as characteristics of the gifted, frequently asked questions, techniques used for instruction, higher level thinking skills, creativity, and perfectionism. A pretest and posttest administered to parents documented growth in parent knowledge over the 10-week implementation period. Appendices contain copies of forms used in the practicum, comments about the practicum from teachers and parents, and a sample newsletter. (Includes 10 references) (JDD)

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# DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PARENT EDUCATION NEWSLETTER TO INCREASE PARENT KNOWLEDGE OF GIFTED CHILDREN

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by

Edith E. Schneider

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

February 1991



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## Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed Edith E. Schneider

Edith E. Schneider

Abstract

Development and Implementation of a Parent Education Newsletter to Increase Parent Knowledge of Gifted Children.
Schneider, Edith E. 1991: Practicum Report, Nova University. The Center for the Advancement of Education.

Descriptors: Gifted Education/Gifted Parent Education/Primary Gifted/Parent Communication/Parent Teacher Relationship/Gifted Parent Newsletter/Effective Parent Education/

The elementary school designated for this project is a relatively new school in a suburban area. The writer is a teacher of first grade gifted children. This practicum report concerns the creation of a newsletter to be used for the purpose of educating parents of gifted first and second grade children. Newsletters containing information to broaden the parents knowledge and understanding of their gifted children, were developed and distributed to parents weekly.

The practicum was also intended to familiarize parents with topics and terminology pertinent to their understanding of their children and their child's education in a gifted program. A pretest and posttest questionnaire were administered to parents to determine the success of the parent education newsletters. Practicum evaluation data documents a strong growth in parent knowledge. Parent comments are included in the practicum report indicative of growth in knowledge.

Among the topics addressed through the parent education newsletter were characteristics of the gifted, frequently asked questions, techniques used for instruction, higher level thinking skills, creativity, and perfectionism. The newsletters also offered insights from gifted children, and input from teachers of the gifted.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Purpose

The setting for this practicum was a suburban elementary school in South Florida. The school opened in August, 1989. Six hundred and twenty-six students, kindergarten through fifth grade, were instructed in self contained classrooms by a faculty of 37 teachers. A variety of programs were provided to meet individual student needs. The school was a full time gifted program center with seven full time certified gifted teachers providing instruction to gifted students. The school's gifted program received gifted students from surrounding elementary schools. The school served as the only gifted program for area students. In addition to the gifted program a specific learning disabilities class, speech/language therapy, hearing impaired class and vision impaired class provided services for exceptional students. A primary resource teacher served teachers and students in kindergarten through third grade to assist with student needs. A full time guidance counselor assisted all students needing guidance services.

The students in the school came from a variety of backgrounds; high, middle and low socio-economic levels.

A middle socio-economic background was most prevalent. All grade levels in the school used the Unified Curriculum as the basis of the instructional program. Art, music and physical education classes provided fine arts instruction. In addition, all students received instruction in media skills, computer literacy, as well as a Spanish language program. Students are recognized during the year for academic achievement and good citizenship through the "Academic Honor Roll", "Quest for the Best", and "Student of the Month" ceremonies. Students have opportunities to participate in a school science fair, field day, cultural programs and field trips.

There is an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) whose efforts benefit the school tremendously. In addition, the school has over 80 volunteers who assist teachers and students.

The writer has seven years of teaching experience. The teaching experience has been in two different states. All seven years have been with students in exceptional education programs.

The writer holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education from the University of Cincinnati. The

writer is certified in Gifted Child Education, Specific Learning Disabilities, and Educable Mentally Handicapped.

The writer was and is presently teaching the full time gifted first grade class. It was the responsibility of the writer to teach the curriculum adopted by the county school board of education, specifically focusing on the Unified Curriculum. In addition to the Unified Curriculum, enrichment and supplemental material was used for instruction.

A problem existed as many parents of gifted children lacked the knowledge and understanding of the gifted child. They felt insecure and uneasy as to their child's needs. This led to feelings of frustration and a need to address those feelings.

The writer recalls that during numerous parent conferences, parents asked specific questions pertaining to giftedness. Among the questions most often asked were: How is my gifted child different from my other children? Why does she read so well and struggle with math? Why is she so insecure if she is gifted? This is all so new to us, where can we get information about gifted children? Why does my child need to be perfect? How can I help my child? Does enrichment mean they will

go on 20 field trips?

In April of 1990, the school held an orientation for parents of gifted children in grades kindergarten through second grade. A video introducing the gifted program was shown. The principal spoke to the parents and introduced the staff and guests. Parents were then encouraged to ask questions. It was apparent to the writer that the parents were genuine in their quest for information. It was apparent to other teachers of gifted students that there existed a definite need for parent education, and that parents were openly asking for it. The questions from the parents were indicative of their apparent need and desire for information. Among the questions raised were: Are the children guinea pigs? Is gifted education experimental? What is enrichment? Why do the children need to play if they are gifted? Why is my child different from other children?

At various times throughout the year parents had commented that much of their information of gifted children came from other parents. An Individualized Education Plan conference was held with the mother of a six year old gifted child, the writer, as teacher of the gifted, and the school board's Gifted Specialist. The

mother also brought a friend who was a retired teacher and whose opinion the mother respected. At the completion of the conference the mother stated her support for the gifted class and her enthusiasm for the effective methods used with her child. The mother verbalized her insecurity concerning her lack of knowledge of gifted children. The mother had received information and opinions from other parents of gifted children. The mother had realized that the information was often erroneous and wanted factual information. The writer spoke with the Gifted Specialist after the mother left. The writer was informed that there was no parent program, parent newsletter, or parent education packet available to all parents of children entering gifted classes. The Gifted Specialist was very aware of the lack of a parent education program and stated that one would be beneficial as more full time gifted centers open.

The fact that a problem existed was evident when the writer conducted a parent survey of 28 parents of gifted students in kindergarten through first grade at the school (Appendix A:27). The survey inquired as to whether the parents felt that there was a need for parent

education concerning giftedness. Eighty-five percent of the parents returned the survey. One hundred percent of the surveys returned were interested in receiving parent education information. Several parents added additional comments (Appendix B:29).

The writer conducted a survey of the other six teachers of gifted students at the school. The survey inquired as to whether those teachers felt there was a need for parent education (Appendix C:31). One hundred percent of the teachers of gifted students returned the survey. One hundred percent of those returned felt that a gifted parent education program would be beneficial. Several teachers added comments (Appendix D:33).

Prior to the close of school a speech therapist came to the writer's classroom. The speech therapist's child was being considered for the gifted program and was hesitant in making the decision. Her understanding of gifted children was that gifted children didn't need to be taught, that gifted children simply had all the information on their own. An art teacher approached the writer stating that her child was being considered for the gifted program. She had the child tested, as she felt there was something wrong with her. The child

exhibited different characteristics than other children. The child tested in the superior range of intelligence and was exhibiting higher level thinking skills.

In summary, it was apparent that a problem existed. At the start of the practicum zero percent of parents of gifted first and second grade children were receiving regular information from the school pertaining to the various aspects of gifted children. Throughout a 10 week period, 100 percent of parents of the 43 gifted first and second grade students involved in the practicum project would receive weekly information pertaining to gifted children. The parents would have this information at hand for immediate and future use. By accomplishing this objective the parents would increase their understanding of gifted learners. The information was received by parents at the beginning of the school year, when they were most receptive and eager to learn.

The parents, during the first week of the parent education program, completed a questionnaire based on their existing knowledge of gifted children (Appendix E:35). The parents answered the same questionnaire upon finishing the program and were execpted to score an 80

percent accuracy in answers indicative of a growth in knowledge pertaining to gifted children.

# CHAPTER II

## Research and Solution Strategy

Upon review of the literature the writer has found supportive evidence that parent education, when the content is specific to the needs of the parents, is beneficial. In reviewing the literature the writer found numerous forms in which parent education was delivered to parents.

As classes for gifted children become more prevalent, the need for parent education is ever increasing. Classes for parents of gifted children are becoming an integral part of student programs (Ness, 1988).

A one day conference for parents of gifted children was established in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Parents from surrounding areas were in attendance. Requests for information of the conference came from many states as well as Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Canada (Meriweather and Karnes, 1988). This is indicative of a wide need for parent information. Parents spent an entire day in sessions covering the needs and characteristics of the gifted as well as receiving printed handouts and listening to expert speakers in the area of gifted

education. Because of its overwhelming success the conference will continue to be conducted, the topics will change and expand to meet the needs of participants in the future (Meriweather and Karnes, 1988).

As mentioned previously, parent education can take numerous forms. A unique, yet universal, instructional tool for the education of parents was implemented in a school system in which a cable television studio was located (MacDonald, 1984). A total of 11 half hour shows were introduced as a form of parent education. Giftedness as well as other topics were covered. Results indicated that the goal of increasing parents awareness and understanding of young children were met.

As educators work with and guide gifted children of all ages it becomes increasingly evident that education of the gifted child does not occur in a vacuum. The opportunity to enhance critical thinking skills begins with very young children. The concept of critical thinking skills is unknown to many parents. An educational consultant with experience in teaching graduate courses for teacher certification in gifted education saw the need for parent education. The educational consultant implemented a practicum designed

to develop selected thinking skills in approximately 40 nursery school three year olds. The practicum was also intended to inform parents of practical techniques for fostering important thinking skills in their children (Gilmore, 1988). Gilmore designed a parent handbook for fostering critical thinking skills in the home. Parents evaluating the handbook reacted positively.

The writer, as a teacher of a full time gifted first grade classroom sees parents when their children are often new to the world of the gifted. Teaching the children is a rewarding, enlightening, and challenging experience. Observing parents who lack the understanding of their child's special needs of giftedness is often difficult. Parents must grow as their children grow. They must share the rewards of education and knowledge. There must be an avenue to reach these parents, and supply them with the information they desire. A little bit of information can drive a person to learn more. Getting parents started with factual and informative information is certainly a positive step.

The amount of commercially prepared materials for the purpose of parent education has increased in recent years. Many of the materials are widely used, through

parent classes and workshops. Gordon (1970) developed the Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) program. Dinkmeyer and McKay (1976) developed the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) program.

Parents of gifted children have many needs that are similar to those of all parents and some that are unique. The unique needs are based on the exceptionality of their children (Conroy, 1987). Conroy stated that one way to begin a partnership and give parents information to make well informed decisions is to offer them a parent education group. An appropriate time to offer such a group is when the school system first identifies their children as gifted. Conroy implemented a parent education workshop with positive results.

In yet another situation, parent education was delivered in the form of a panel discussion. Panel experts were chosen who had varying perspectives on the issues. A moderator was chosen to keep the discussion on topic and to maintain its flow. Ideas and suggestions were exchanged. Voss (1988) found the meeting so well received that the format was replicated at a regional institute with a high level of audience participation.

In determining the solution strategy of the writer

to the apparent problem of the lack of parent education at the writer's school, yet another piece of literature was reviewed and deemed quite valuable. Powell (1986) found that despite the recent growth and a long history of parent education, the vast array of program types also prompts questions about the effectiveness of different strategies. The success of the program is based on how well it is planned, taking into account all variables, and how well it is implemented. There is no convincing evidence that one particular program is significantly more effective than another.

It is equally important for teachers in the home to understand the needs of gifted children and how to meet these needs as it is for teachers in the schools. Clark (1988) has often given five to eight week parent inservice courses that help parents better understand the problems of the school, the program, and their gifted children.

It is the writer's intention to provide parents of gifted children with information in an attempt to meet their needs and help them better understand their gifted children. The writer will send home weekly newsletters to parents of gifted children in the first and second

grade full time gifted classes at the school.

This solution strategy was chosen for numerous reasons. These children are presently the youngest children in the full time gifted classes. Their parents will be targeted for the parent education newsletters in hope of giving them a sound foundation on which to build as their children get older. The strategy of a newsletter will be the most effective means of delivery of information to parents. The school serves as a center for gifted education and receives children from surrounding schools. Given the difficulties in scheduling parent meetings due to siblings schedules, carpools, work schedules and other commitments and responsibilities, the newsletter, will be used as the vehicle for all parents to receive the same information at the same time.

To insure that the newsletter arrives home on the day it was intended, a special delivery system will be implemented. As the parent receives the newsletter from the child and opens it, there will be something for the child as well. Enclosed will be a sticker, a balloon, a coded message, a maze, or other simple thank you.

The newsletter will also serve as reference to the

parent. Parents will be able to save the information and therefore do not need to digest all information at once. They can refer to the newsletters when there is a need for clarification on a characteristic of the gifted, or for helpful suggestions in dealing with perfectionism, or to write down the title and author of a book they want to purchase.

# CHAPTER III

## Implementation Plan

The writer sent a parent education newsletter to parents of gifted first and second grade students enrolled in the full time gifted program at the school. Practicum implementation began on September 12, 1990, when the initial parent questionnaire was sent home. The practicum was initiated on a Wednesday, which allowed for 10 consecutive Wednesdays without holiday interruptions. This schedule allowed for the practicum to be completed on November 14, 1990, with the post questionnaire. The writer's intent was to complete the implementation plan prior to the Thanksgiving vacation. Between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, numerous parents travel with their families and implementation would be interrupted.

Forty-three parents of gifted first and second grade children received the parent education newsletters. The newsletters were sent home at the end of the day with the child. To insure that the newsletter arrived home, a special delivery system was implemented. As the parent received the newsletter from the child and opened it, there was something for the child as well. Enclosed was

a sticker, a balloon, a coded message or other simple thank you. It was the responsibility of the writer to send the newsletters home.

In the first week of implementation, the parents of gifted first and second grade students received a letter of introduction to the parent newsletter. In addition, they received the parent questionnaire, and were asked to complete the questionnaire and return the questionnaire to school with their child by September 14, 1990.

In the second week of implementation a newsletter was sent home with the child. Characteristics of the gifted child were explored. The purpose was to help parents develop a better understanding of their gifted children. The information in this newsletter was to help parents understand the meaning of the gifted label. In addition to gifted characteristics being explained, the needs of gifted children were also explained.

In the third week of implementation, the parent newsletter was sent home. The contents primarily addressed frequently asked questions by parents of gifted children. Numerous authors have addressed parent questions concerning gifted children. This newsletter

shared the many opinions of these authors in answering frequently asked questions. Parents also became aware of authors dealing with gifted education.

In the fourth parent newsletter, the content pertained to Benjamin Bloom, Bloom's Taxonomy, and enrichment. Bloom's Taxonomy is frequently used with young gifted children in the gifted classroom. Parents were informed of the six areas of Bloom's Taxonomy and how they relate to gifted education. An explanation of the six areas were described in a lesson offering enrichment to gifted children.

The fifth week of the parent newsletter offered input from the teachers of gifted children at the school. Teachers wrote articles pertaining to gifted children. In addition this newsletter shared insight from gifted students as to how they perceive the word "gifted."

In the sixth parent newsletter the content pertained to the myths and realities of giftedness. Parents often base their thinking on their existing knowledge. One parent approached the writer and was unable to make a decision to place her child in a gifted program. The parent was basing the decision on the myth that gifted children do not need to be taught, but that they already

have the information. Among other frequent myths to be addressed in this parent newsletter were IQ and creativity.

In the seventh week of implementation, parents received information pertaining to perfectionism. An explanation of perfectionism was given, as well as characteristic behaviors of perfectionists. Suggestions were given to help parents break the pattern that perfectionism has on gifted children.

In the eighth week the content of the newsletter focused on thinking skills and creativity. The many aspects of thinking skills and the gifted child were explained. Examples were given of various thinking skills to assist the parent in their understanding. Creativity was also defined. Suggestions for fostering creativity in gifted children were offered.

The ninth week of implementation offered a newsletter to the parents containing suggested readings and organizations. The parents received a list of references, book titles and authors in the field of gifted children. The information was intended for use by the parent at their discretion. In addition, the newsletter contained a list of organizations that pertain

to parents of gifted children.

The tenth week was the final week. The parent questionnaire was completed by the parents and returned to the school. The questionnaire was the same questionnaire that was sent home to parents the first week of implementation.

# Chapter IV

## Results

The writer has presented evidence that over a 10 week period of time, the parents of gifted first and second grade students received weekly parent education information in the form of newsletters pertaining to gifted education. Excerpts from parent comments received by the writer in response to the weekly newsletters, indicated the newsletters were well received (Appendix F:38). A sample of the newsletter is included (Appendix G:40).

The writer has presented evidence that over a 10 week period, the parents of gifted first and second grade students exhibited an increase in knowledge from information received in parent education newsletters. Evidence is based on the results of the pretest and posttest questionnaire completed by parents (Appendix E:35). The pretest questionnaire completed by parents prior to the newsletters, resulted in 67% correct responses. The posttest questionnaire completed by parents after receiving the newsletters resulted in 85% correct responses. This is an increase of 17 percentage points.

The writer anticipated presenting evidence that over the 10 week period, parents of gifted first and second grade students would score with 80% accuracy on the posttest questionnaire, indicative of a growth in knowledge. As previously stated, the posttest questionnaire resulted in 85% correct responses.

The writer concludes that there is enough evidence to support the use of parent education newsletters as a means of increasing parent knowledge and understanding of gifted children.

# Chapter V

## Recommendations

The writer's practicum, Development and Implementation of a Parent Education Newsletter to Increase Parent Knowledge of Gifted Children, allowed the parents of gifted children an opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of the gifted child.

The principal of the school was very supportive of this practicum (Appendix H:49). The writer reported the results of the practicum to the principal of the school. The writer has shared the practicum and its results with all teachers of the gifted, at the center. The writer intends to share the results of the parent education newsletters with the gifted coordinators for the county at a future meeting. It is the writer's hope that a similar newsletter could be available to parents at other gifted centers in the county. The writer has shared the information in the newsletters with the writer's teaching assistant, to increase her understanding of the gifted children she works with daily.

The writer has distributed the newsletters to the parents of gifted children recently placed in the writer's classroom. Based on the success of this

practicum the writer will continue to distribute information to parents of newly placed gifted children, as needed.

It is the writer's hope that by sharing the information and the results of this practicum, educators and administrators will become more aware of the importance of parent education.

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# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX A

# PARENTS' SURVEY

## APPENDIX A

## PARENTS' SURVEY

Parents:

It has been a busy year for our full-time gifted program. Many of you have expressed an interest in obtaining more information pertaining to the various aspects of gifted children, as well as their educational needs.

Please fill out and return the bottom portion of this survey. Your input is important.

---

___ I would not be interested in more information pertaining to gifted children.

___ I would be very interested in more information pertaining to gifted children.

Comments:

# APPENDIX B

## PARENTS' COMMENTS

## APPENDIX B

## PARENTS' COMMENTS

The following are comments made by parents in response to the survey of parents of gifted children.

"A newsletter would be very much appreciated, especially when it comes to explaining behavioral characteristics of gifted children, how to handle disappointments, what to do when the gifted child is argumentative, disrespectful, etc."

"An excellent idea."

"I'd find it a GODSEND."

"Any information would be appreciated."

"Although I am a very poor typist, I would love to help you out on this project!"

# APPENDIX C

## TEACHERS' SURVEY

## APPENDIX C

## TEACHERS' SURVEY

Teachers of the Gifted:

Your input would be appreciated on whether you feel there is a need to provide parent education on various aspects of gifted learners at our school.

As you have worked with numerous gifted children and their parents, please check one of the following:

___ I do not see a need for this type of parent education.

___ I see a definite need and find parent education to be beneficial.

Comments:

# APPENDIX D

## TEACHERS' COMMENTS

# APPENDIX D

## TEACHERS' COMMENTS

The following are comments made by teachers of gifted children.

"Information coming from an educator's perspective would be most informative for parents! Could we all have input?"

"I think this would be an ideal way to create closer communication with our parents. It would be a vehicle for mutual understanding and closer ties."

"Parents expectations for the gifted program or for their children are often unrealistic."

"This is especially important for young children's parents so they understand the direction we're going in the beginning."

# APPENDIX E

# PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

## APPENDIX E

## PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

| | | TRUE | FALSE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I am aware of the characteristics of gifted children. | T | F |
| 2. | I am aware of the needs of gifted children. | T | F |
| 3. | I am familiar with Benjamin Bloom. | T | F |
| 4. | I understand the term "enrichment." | T | F |
| 5. | I understand Blooms Taxonomy. | T | F |
| 6. | The more intelligent child may or may not be the more creative child. | T | F |
| 7. | An individuals IQ score may or may not remain the same throughout their lifetime. | T | F |
| 8. | All gifted children are individuals. | T | F |
| 9. | Gifted children would define the word gifted differently. | T | F |
| 10. | I understand what is meant by higher level thinking skills. | T | F |
| 11. | I understand the gifted characteristic of perfectionism. | T | F |
| 12. | I am familiar with authors who write books addressing gifted children. | T | F |
| 13. | I am familiar with gifted newsletters/magazine publications of gifted children. | T | F |
| 14. | I am familiar with local gifted organizations. | T | F |

15. Gifted children are not equally gifted in all areas. T F

16. Not all gifted children are highly creative. T F

17. I am familiar with the Unified Curriculum. T F

18. I understand how the gifted child puts pressure on himself. T F

19. I understand the need for the gifted child to play. T F

20. It is important for the parents of gifted children to be involved with their child's education. T F

# APPENDIX F

## EXCERPTS FROM PARENTS' COMMENTS

## APPENDIX F

## EXCERPTS FROM PARENTS' COMMENTS

"Thank you for your extra work to get this newsletter out to us!"

"Thank you for the newsletters. I have learned a great deal about the gifted child and the gifted program!"

"More newsletters please. They help a lot. Thanks."

"I've enjoyed the articles! Thanks!"

"Thanks for sending them home. We've enjoyed them."

"I enjoy these newsletters and would like to see them continue."

"I've always enjoyed reading up on different aspects of child care and have enjoyed your newsletters as another source of information."

"I appreciated all the articles. Being a parent of a child that is creative and right brain oriented, it is good to know that gifted is not addressed in terms of academics only as it has been for years by many "old school" educators."

"Thank you for your efforts!"

# APPENDIX G

# SAMPLE NEWSLETTER

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE NEWSLETTER

# PARENTS

The following articles will provide you with information to answer many of your questions. Some of the information will probably be new to you. I hope you find it informative.

## OM AND ACADEMIC GAMES

Children at Lighthouse Elementary are able to participate in 2 challenging academic after school programs. The first, Academic Games, is open to 4th and 5th grade students. There are three seasons; math, social studies, and language. In the math season, students learn many math concepts in a cube game called Equations. The social studies season consists of learning all the presidents as well as reviewing current events, and researching a selected theme in history. Finally, the language cube game LINGUSHTIKS teaches parts of speech. Students train after school and a final team of ten students goes to county competition at Gold Coast Academy in West Palm Beach several times a month.

Another competition, Odyssey of the Mind (OM) promotes divergent thinking, team work, self confidence and encourages problem solving for creative solutions. A participating school must purchase a membership in order to receive materials and the long term problems. Teams consist of 5 - 7 students in third grade and up. They are coached by a teacher or parent. Students must devise their own solutions. Students also participate in spontaneous problem solving, thinking quickly and creatively within specific time limits. This year Palm Beach County will have their district competition on March 16th. Winners in each category will then compete in the state competition in Tampa.

Sarah Lemnitzer
Teacher of the Gifted

## LET THEM BE CHILDREN

Often teachers and parents expect their gifted students and children to be "perfect" in all aspects of their lives. Gifted children may be intellectually capable of performing at a higher level academically, however, their emotional, social and developmental growth should not be expected to be any more mature than other children their age.

One of the characteristics of "giftedness" is perfectionism. These children already expect a great deal of themselves, so when teacher and parental expectations mount and are added to the self induced pressure, the result could be frustration, rebellion, low acheivement, low self esteem, and/or negative behavior.

Gifted children usually have a high energy level and should be allowed as much or more creative play time and physical activity during the school day, after school, and on weekends as their peers. Opportunities for verbal expression in the higher level thought processes and critical thinking skills should be encouraged and voluminous amounts of written assignments should be limited.

Remember to read to your children, as well as listening to them read to you, on a regular basis. They still enjoy the nursery rhymes, fantasy literature, and dramatic play.

Lets allow our gifted children to experience the joys of a childhood!

Jan LaBelle
Teacher of the Gifted

# UNIFIED CURRICULUM

The Unified Curriculum has been implemented in Palm Beach County public schools since 1978. The curriculum includes, for all areas, course/subject objectives, a set of instructional materials, an evaluation system, and a record-keeping method to record student progress.

The purpose of unifying the curriculum is to:

1. define the scope and sequence of all programs;
2. provide up-to-date and appropriate materials for all students;
3. assure equity in instruction for a highly mobile in-county population; and
4. provide teachers with a clear set of instructional objectives.

The Unified Curriculum is the basis or the starting point of the elementary gifted instructional program. The Unified Curriculum is expanded upon or enhanced into higher level thought processes. The needs of the student will determine where the teacher starts with the enhancement process.

Prior to unifing the curriculum in 1978 the variety, quality, and numbers of textbooks were inadequate. Teachers found themselves with three or more textbook series for use in the same classroom and within the same grade level. No sequence or continuity existed either school-wide or district wide. No progress record (other than report cards) was kept on a student. This caused frustration and extra work for successive teachers.



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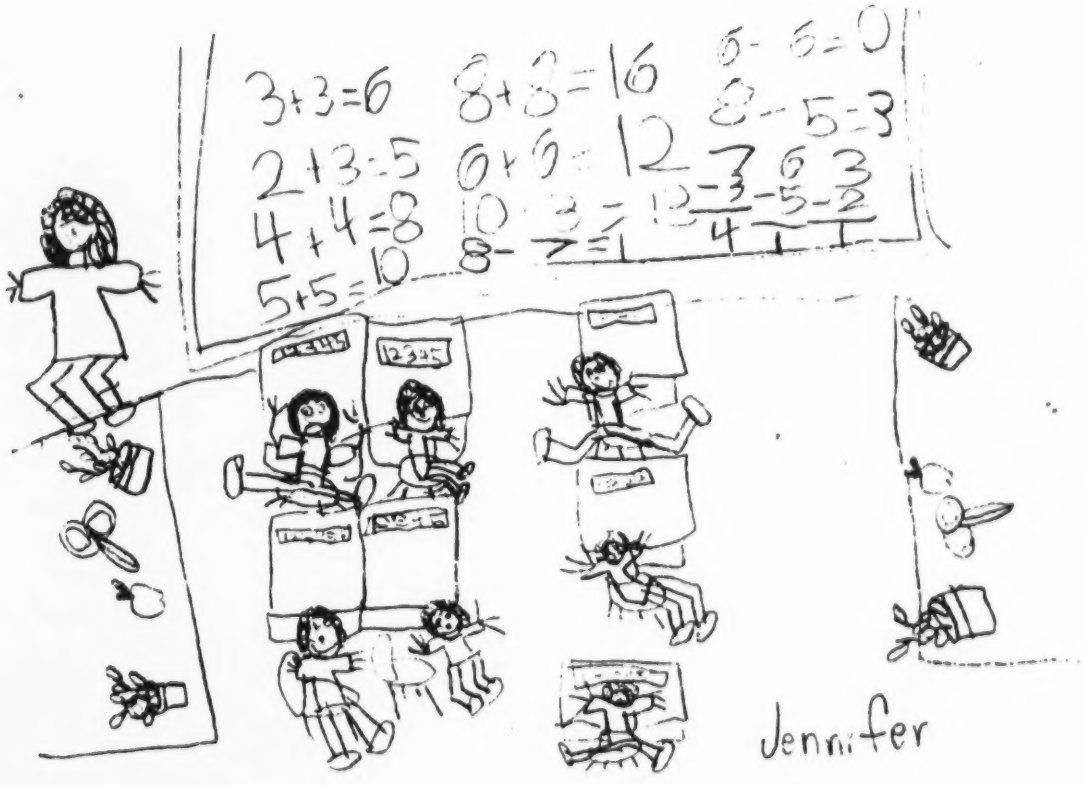
The [illegible] Curriculum provides schools with the objectives, materials, and evaluation tools to measure student progress against a set standard. Student performance indicates that the [illegible] curriculum is working successfully. Its systematic organization assists teachers in providing [illegible] and equitable instructional programs in Palm Beach County public schools.

[illegible]
Principal

# We like to learn.




Jennifer



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# "ON A DIFFERENT THOUGHT"

In school and in most apsects of our lives we are taught to conform to the rule, to give "the" correct answer. Of course there is much merit in this for it gives order to our lives. What it doesn't do, however, is stimulate creative thought.

The children of today will soon be shouldering many world and personal problems. They must be prepared to find new solutions. Solutions that stray from the usual and traditional. How then can children prepare for such a responsibility? How will they be able to create these new ideas?

The answer lies in the teaching of divergent thinking skills, particularly to our brightest children. They can learn to view situations from many angles, to solve real life probelms, to realize there is more than one answer to many questions. They can also learn through this type of thinking that their choices can be expanded and how to risk trying out new ideas.

By practicing as children the skills that they will need as adults, we as their teachers feel that they will be better prepared and will have learned new ways to help reach their creative potential.

Diane Kinlaw
Teacher of the Gifted

# ORGANIZATIONS

The following, is a list of organizations, that many parents of gifted children find helpful.

FLAG (Florida Association for the Gifted) This organization is the state advocacy group for gifted.
Contact: Steve Largo, Pine View School, 2525 Tami Sola St., Sarasota, Fl. 34237.

PALS (Parents for Able Learners)
Contact: Dr. Joyce Chumbley, 3213 Burch Field Avenue, Orlando, Fl. 32812-6804. Telephone: (407) 275-5942.

PAGE (Parents Association for Gifted Education) This is a local group for parents in southern Palm Beach County.
Contact: Amy Selzer, Telephone: (407) 487-6958, or Cindy Lenz, Telephone: (407) 479-3085

Una Hukill
Assistant Principal

## TO ME "GIFTED" MEANS...

**CHILDREN IN THE FIRST AND FIFTH GRADE CLASSES WERE ASKED TO WRITE ON THIS TOPIC.**

**YOU MAY FIND THEIR THOUGHTS ENLIGHTENING.**

To be in gifted means to me understanding things and listening to thing better. It doesnot meen being smarter than normal people or being better than everyone. Or knowing more.

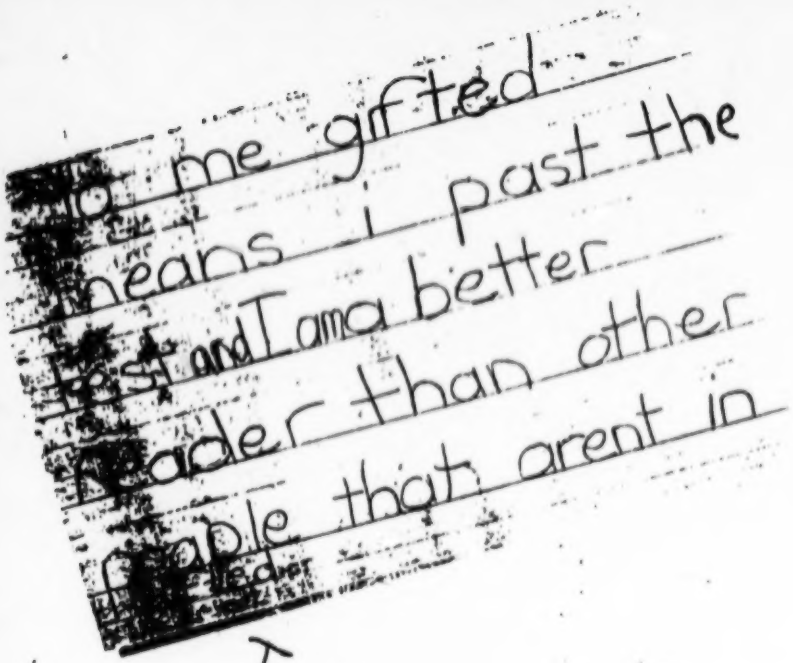
What Gifted Means to Me

Gifted means we can't stop learning. There is know end to what we can learn.

To me, being gifted means having a good memory, and learing well or easily. Gifted people are not more special. They just remember what they have learned better. Gifted people often tend to want to work at their own pace.

Gifted kids like the gifted program it a challenge. The gifted program is a some what time consuming but are done independent

I think being gifted means to be smarter than usual. I enjoy being gifted because they know you know the skills, so there's less work.




To me gifted means to use Your Brain. to Learn things that older Kids Like in second Grade Knows.

To me gifted means: That I get gifts evrey Christmy

To me gifted means. I past the test. I can reid god. I all wes do all of the pags



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Being gifted to me means being able to be in a class where you at your own pace and have creative thinking centers open for free time.

What it means to be gifted to me?

I think Gifted is a good program for kids. Gifted has thought me alot and I like how it is all put together. Gifted isn't really that but it is harder than a regular class. I like it very much and I hope that it is going to be in progress for a long time. I would say that it is good for everyone who is smart, and good in class.



## What I Think about Being In Gifted.

I think being in gifted means that we have a special gift to work hard and get things done.

I also think being in gifted is Special because you have less time to finish your work..

It means to be done what more creative then others. To let your brain brainstorm. Giving more excitment to your sentances and stories is what it means. To do not just work but to do other sheets and a different kind of work away from the text books.

To me gifted means that weare smarter!

To me gifted Im happy

To me gified means I dont no



To me gifted means. Lucky and sert fun esy and herd and grat techer

To me gifted means that Iam healthy.

# APPENDIX H

# LETTER OF SUPPORT

LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

September, 1990

Nova University
Practicum Program

To Whom It May Concern,

I have given Edie Schneider, teacher of the gifted-grade one, my approval for her Nova University practicum project, "Parent Education for the Gifted Child". I believe that this project will be of great assistance to Mrs. Schneider as well her parents and myself as the school center principal. Through this project I can fore see a decrease in parent questions/complaints that currently filter through my office. By making parents aware of the many aspects of gifted education they will become more informed and understanding of the school's gifted program.

I also see this project as a method of increasing parent knowledge and understanding of their own gifted children. This will be a way to build positive relations with parent and child as well as parent and teacher.

Through Mrs. Schneider's outlined activities she will develop a method for positive communication with parents which is currently in need. When parents are misinformed or do not understand they become defensive and question the methods being used. This project will provide them with the understanding and vocabulary needed in order to discuss gifted education for their child today and in the future. This will allow parents to feel at ease with and become involved with gifted education programs their children will be exposed to as they progess through the grade levels.

I am looking forward to the positive results this project will bring to Mrs. Schneider's class. I also plan on having her share her project with other teachers upon the completion of the practicum.

Sincerely,

Janis Andrews

Janis Andrews
Principal

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4750 155th LANE NORTH, JUPITER, FL 33458 (407)744-7961